



MEASURE J RE-IMAGINE LA
Housing SUBCOMMITTEE
February 24, 2021, 4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

1. The Housing Subcommittee was called to order by Bill Tarkanian and Sophia Li at 4:06 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION AND GROUNDING

- a. Co-Chair Sophia Li led a brief discussion of Measure J and the Housing subcommittee as means to address immediate housing crises and larger systemic issues that cause housing instability and homelessness for historically disenfranchised, over-policed, and neglected communities.
- b. Miguel Perla and Elizabeth (Liz) Sunwoo were introduced as co-facilitators.
- c. Liz provided a brief overview of the agenda will be conducted and how the meeting will be executed.
- d. Liz also reviewed the Group Agreements regarding meeting decorum.

3. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- a. Bill opened the floor and introduced the following Panelists:
 - i. Suzette Shaw, Grassroots Advocate/Poetess who would lead in the panel discussion addressing the continued barriers that community members face in accessing housing and discussing community-based housing solutions
 1. Suzette Shaw shared her personal experience of how she became a Skid Row resident
 - ii. Steve Diaz, Director of Organizing at LA Community Action Network
 1. A community-based membership organization that works on issues of food access, civil rights, housing justice, and gender justice issues for the South Los Angeles community and Skid Row LA
 - iii. Zerita Jones, Vice Chairperson of Liberty Community Land Trust
 1. Their work is geared towards renter rights protections, and anti-displacement (i.e., working in policy and advocacy for community members)
 - iv. Jose Arellano, Director of Case Management & Navigation at Homeboy Industries
 1. Shared his experience with Homeboy industries as a client and now Director of Case Management.
 - v. Pastor Troy Vaughn, Executive Director of the Los Angeles Mission, Founder of Christ-Centered Ministries and the Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership
- b. Following introductions, Bill moved to the panel discussion

4. PANEL DISCUSSION

a. The following questions were asked as prompts for the panel discussion:

i. What are the biggest barriers that you've seen and continue to see that prevent our most vulnerable community members from accessing stable, long-term, and permanent housing?

1. Jose began the discussion by noting the lack of opportunities (i.e., jobs) and financial means to provide housing.

a. He discussed how having a criminal record also created challenges to obtaining/paying for rent/housing.

2. Zerita continued by addressing how tenants can often face eviction because apartment or housing owners/landlords fail to communicate with their tenants.

a. The subcommittee needs to prioritize funding for community-based organizations

3. Steve called for the subcommittee to focus on increasing and enforcing tenant rights. He also stated that emergency fixes for housing should be connected to providing long-term permanent affordable housing and housing creation.

4. Suzette agreed with the other panelists. She stated how formerly incarcerated individuals do not know that despite their record having been expunged, and it may still show up which can negatively impact the chances of obtaining job opportunities and housing.

a. Additionally, Suzette noted how the minimum wage is no longer enough for the increasing rent.

5. Troy called the subcommittee to focus on providing housing according to individual needs. Suggest there needs to be Federal Level changes and access to opportunities for those with a criminal background. Troy also recommends an inventory of all available housing from community-based organizations that are being underutilized.

ii. What affordable housing models are working, particularly with regard to the justice involved population?

1. Troy recommends increasing current housing subsidies and create inclusion in the subsidies components so underserved communities can participate. He also suggests leveraging unused housing stock to support those returning to society.

2. Jose highlighted that the most important thing is to help people navigate through all the systems while still focusing on changing policy.

3. Suzette recommends that elected officials need to work better with developers to hold them accountable.

4. Steve points out that as of 2019, the rate of evictions was almost at 400,000 to 500,000 people just in LA County. As such, it is critical that Measure J funding recommendations are made with these numbers in mind to ensure affordable housing for the community.

5. Zerita details there needs to be resources to keep properties that are going to be auctioned in the hands of the people and community rather than being auctioned to speculators and real estate developers.
- iii. Are there any other community-based solutions that you have seen be successful, or what additional solutions are needed to remove the current barriers that are in place?
 1. Jose suggests that lease agreements for people upon reentry need to be changed so those recently released can be included in rental agreements. In terms of navigating the system, it needs to be intentional across the board on what will be done collectively (e.g., The process between organizations and networks and how to help the individual navigate the housing element)
 2. Troy agrees that barriers should be removed from subsidized housing and recommends making sure people are contracted/hired within communities (i.e., ensure economic/educational opportunities for disenfranchised populations)
 - a. Use the resources already in the community
 - b. Get back the housing stock
 3. Suzette highlighted how the penal code system has to do a better job with preparing formerly incarcerated individuals to enter the community by providing educational opportunities such as vocational skills
 4. Steve suggested divesting from policing, supporting the repeal of Costa Hawkins Rental Housing and Ellis Act, and ensuring anti-tenant harassment policies are created and enforceable.
- b. Liz opened the floor for questions and public comments. The following members of the public addressed the subcommittee:
 1. Aureliano Galvez
 2. Phone Number
 3. Jessa Calderon
 4. Alvin Teng
 5. Hakeem Parke-davis
 6. Hector Ramirez
 7. Laura Reimer
 8. Zachary Warma
 9. Ben Kay
 10. Shannon Thomas
- c. Miguel begins discussion about the Emerging Funding Recommendation Elements: The who – who are the groups upon which the subcommittee should focus.
 - i. Black people
 - ii. Transgender and LGBTQIA+
 - iii. Systems Impacted People
 1. People with foster care involvement or backgrounds
 2. Individuals that have no diagnosis but served long term incarceration
 3. Folks with injustice system involvement or background

- 4. Patients in substance use disorder treatment
 - 5. Lack of housing for people experiencing Domestic Violence
- d. Lack of Community-based and driven housing programs for specific groups
 - i. Latino
 - ii. Native American
 - iii. Disabled
 - iv. Black communities in San Fernando Valley
 - v. Foster kids timed out
 - vi. TAY
 - vii. Chronically homeless
 - viii. Undocumented communities
 - ix. Youth
- e. Emerging Funding Recommendation Elements: “What” – Identifying the challenges that exist
 - i. Initial Ideas from Jamboards & Chat on Barriers & Challenges
 - 1. Culturally competent providers
 - 2. Language access
 - 3. Understand the Black community
 - ii. Engaging local Tongva tribe
 - iii. County, agency, and CBO collaboration and integration
 - 1. Need a joint agency to identify and use underused public land
 - iv. Big developer loopholes - enforcing requiring affordable units
 - v. Fees and funds that are needed to secure housing
 - vi. Reserving enough housing units for formerly incarcerated folks
 - vii. Bureaucracy (applications, different agencies, etc.) for folks to access housing
 - viii. Starting the housing process while transitioning out of system
 - ix. Connecting job training/placement with housing - they are interconnected
- f. Emerging Funding Recommendation Elements: “How”
 - i. Affordable housing models
 - 1. Expand or refine affordable successful housing models designed for and tailored to justice-involved individuals with mental health and/or substance use disorder needs.
 - ii. Update policies to remove barriers
 - 1. Remove barriers to treatment, employment, and affordable housing, including recovery housing, based on stigmatization and discrimination due to record of past convictions through local and state legislative intervention or updating County policies
 - iii. Invest in community of care
 - 1. Develop and expand pre-arrest and pre-booking diversion programs, using decentralized, cross-functional teams to coordinate behavioral health assessments and connections to community-based systems of care, for people whose justice system involvement is driven by unmet behavioral health needs, in coordination with law enforcement and community providers.

- g. Summary of ideas & comments from Meeting #1
 - i. Fund existing programs through Measure J
 - 1. County-based programs that work well and need to scale
 - 2. Community-based housing, not large shelters
 - 3. Those who have empty beds
 - 4. Those who currently don't have housing & those who are at risk of losing their homes (rent relief)
 - ii. Models such as:
 - 1. Solutions for homelessness: ABH, Safe Parking, Sanctioned Encampments, leasing motels, etc. for immediate relief
 - 2. Housing built in religious facilities
 - 3. Housing specific to Trans Community
 - 4. Accessible to people with disabilities
 - 5. Women with children especially those who are trying to reunify with their children in Foster care
 - 6. Shared housing with private rooms and common spaces
 - iii. Pilot ideas
 - 1. Culturally competent housing for Black & Indigenous communities
 - 2. Consultation with local tribes (e.g. work closely with Tongva people)
 - 3. Those who have substance abuse challenges
 - 4. We should highlight recent innovative programs
 - 5. We need to be collaborating together - fund housing programs that connect/collaborate with other complementary programs
 - 6. Need two strategies for those that are able to work and those who are unable to work (Communities of Care)
 - 7. Opportunity for smaller orgs to provide these services
 - 8. Investment of other housing models and strategies that focus on tenant ownership, cooperatives, community land trust. Prevention of naturally occurring affordable housing
 - 9. Tax on vacant buildings - no big-money developer should be allowed to have all these vacant units while people are leaving jail and exiting homelessness
 - 10. Fund projects that buy existing buildings that could be converted to residential usage to provide housing (social housing, community-controlled housing models, community land trusts)
 - 11. Reserve units in affordable housing developments for formerly system impacted folx. No age limits and don't make them go through CES
 - 12. We need a regional housing authority to joint powers authority that can help assemble underused public land across public agencies to help scale affordable and social housing
 - 13. Equity/opportunity for building generational wealth
 - iv. Long-term affordable housing & permanent subsidies
 - 1. Invest in preventing people from falling into homelessness. Support people at risk for losing housing

- v. Ideas for policy changes
 - 1. Waive application fees, credit and background checks, etc. for justice-involved folks
 - 2. Directing 911 homelessness-related calls outside of law-enforcement
 - 3. Requiring all county projects have sizable number of affordable units
 - 4. Grow County's Affordable Housing Trust Fund
 - 5. Give priority to housing providers who are Black-owned and BIPOC owned
 - 6. Address future of Eviction Moratorium
 - 7. Opportunities to convert commercially zoned areas to housing
 - 8. Maximize use of county land and consider eminent domain actions to convert motels/other to housing quickly
 - 9. There should be a wider choice for individuals to get housing outside of areas where no longer want to live in because it is dangerous or not conducive to their health
 - 10. Reserve housing units for formerly system-impacted folks would be really helpful, no age limits
- vi. Supportive funding to get housing
 - 1. Move-in Fund (rent and utility deposit)
- vii. Information & accessibility
 - 1. Language access
 - 2. Easily available housing information
 - 3. Fix challenge within the CES system
 - 4. Right to counsel for evictions
 - 5. Provide housing accessible to undocumented communities
 - 6. A supportive housing model where folks who don't want to "cut a deal" to be released out of jail, so community workers can work with them on a release plan
- viii. Data that is needed?
 - 1. How many housing units, beds, and housing subsidies do we need?
 - 2. Data- what is really working and not working?
 - 3. Need a discussion about the disconnect between how housing and services are rendered.
- ix. Programs that connect those who will reenter to housing before they are released
 - 1. Communication between Parole, Probation, ect. To connect their caseloads to housing
 - 2. Strong connection to Employment and Housing
 - 3. Programs that will prevent people from going from incarceration to homelessness.
- h. Liz broke the subcommittee into break-out rooms with the following guided questions to be discussed and added to the Jamboard:

- i. For 2021: What are the programs/ initiatives your break-out group thinks we should prioritize for funding for 2021 under your ATI recommendations?
 - ii. Beyond 2021: Track which recommendation would be beyond 2021? What needs infrastructure built that doesn't exist now?
- i. Miguel ended the breakout rooms and led the discussion to allow members to reflect on their ideas from the breakout rooms.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. The meeting was opened for members to provide general public comment. The following members of the public addressed the subcommittee:
 - I. Jose Arellano
 - II. Shannon Thomas

6. ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment for the Housing Subcommittee meeting of Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at 6:35 p.m.

There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned by facilitator Liz Sunwoo.